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EDITORIAL: THE DEMOCRATS' CHOICE

the

# Commonweal

CHRISTOPHER DAWSON — A NEW CHRISTIAN SOCIETY

WALDEMAR GURIAN — REVIVAL OF GERMANY

ANNE FREMANTLE
JOHN W. SIMONS

august 8

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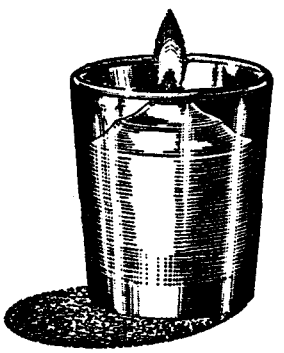

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# THE Commonweal

## week by week

### THE DEMOCRATS' CHOICE

THE Democratic National Convention offered some refreshing contrasts to its Republican counterpart, and also many points of dreary similarity. Unlike the Republicans, the Democrats did not present the nation's fascinated television audience with the spectacle of two almost equally matched, monolithic giants engaged in a mortal struggle for the possession of their party's soul. The Democrats struggled, of course, and with great bitterness, but their disputes remained more factional than internecine; there was never any serious doubt that when the issues were finally resolved the Democratic party would remain the Democratic party.

The Republicans had cheered General MacArthur and Senator McCarthy and then gone on to nominate Dwight D. Eisenhower; after their cheers for Senator Douglas and Mrs. Roosevelt there was never much chance that the Democrats would proceed to name Pat McCarran or Jimmy Byrnes as their standard-bearer.

But like the Republicans, the Democrats nursed dry every partisan platitude in their book. If the Republican orators had beaten a phantom socialism to death, the Democrats came right back by administering one more coup de grace to Herbert Hoover. Watching both spectacles, the beleaguered independent voter must have wondered many times just how far from the present's complex and very un-partisan realities political parties can wander in their frantic search for votes, without repudiating their last claim to the voters' serious consideration.

Then, after the seemingly endless clichés, the Democrats did what practically everyone expected them to do all along: they united on the man who had not wanted their nomination, who seems to have done all in his power to escape it, short of the irrevocable (and, for a politician, impossible) Sherman-like refusal to run. They nominated Adlai Stevenson of Illinois and he, resigned, accepted their nomination in a speech which in its humility, dignity, and profound freshness did much to redeem both parties from the foolishness of their own banalities.

Governor Stevenson's appearance before the weary delegates, many of whom knew little of him and were anxious to see and measure the man they had drafted to lead them, had its overtones of irony, and of history. The contrast between the new Democratic leader and the retiring President who introduced him could not have been more striking. Harry S. Truman offered his audience one of his inimitable "give 'em hell" speeches. He fought the battles of 1932 and 1948 all over again. The delegates loved it, even though they had heard it many times before.

THEN the new man stood where the President had stood a moment before, and he told the delegates that there are no easy decisions, no ready answers; that, in this regard, it would be better to lose the election than mislead the people. The Governor's words provided an answer to the compelling argument that there is need for a change, and this not so much in his argument that change for the sake of change has no merit, as in the overall level of the speech itself. With this speech the change *had* occurred, and only the dull or the hopelessly partisan could fail to note it. The era of the whistle-stop approach to national problems was clearly, and suddenly, over, and the original whistle-stopper himself sat there applauding its demise and encouraging the new voice.

The emergence of Adlai Stevenson as the Democratic nominee has clearly left certain independent newspapers which had made early irrevocable commitments to an Eisenhower candidacy in a somewhat ambiguous situation. The very principles which, they had argued, made the General's election imperative—the selection of a national leader free from obvious partisan strife and the "need for a change"—are now realized with such success in the Illinois Governor that the case for the General has lost much of that cogency which it would have continued to possess had the Democrats named any of their other choices. Eisenhower's charm may fade



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in inverse ratio to Stevenson's brilliance and originality.

To write these things is not to say the campaign is over before it has started, or that a final and easy decision in favor of the Governor should now be made. A great deal yet depends on the stands to be taken in the next few months by both candidates. The question remains of how thoroughly Eisenhower can raise his party to the responsible level which is his own claim to the voter's consideration. And we must see how successfully the Democrats respond to the statesmanlike challenge of Stevenson's opening utterance. But in this the burden of proof now rests with the General, for his party and his speeches to date present him with the heavier liabilities.

The selection of both parties constitutes a major vindication of the democratic process, and we think it safe to say that, the dark forebodings of the partisans on either side notwithstanding, the voters of this country can now afford to weigh their eventual choice with calm deliberation, confident that the national interest will be well served in either alternative. But the nomination of Adlai Stevenson promises to raise American politics to a new level of enlightened responsibility, and we now await with great interest the Republican response.

### *SPARKMAN OF ALABAMA*

TO the man in the street it would seem that the Democrats passed up one good chance at Chicago; they might have nominated as Adlai Stevenson's running mate a candidate with a wide personal following in every section of the country. Instead they have named a prominent Senator from the deep South.

No other Democratic combination would have answered the widespread demand for political reform as effectively as a Stevenson-Kefauver ticket. It would have robbed the Republicans of their strongest single campaign argument. Perhaps a reform ticket of the party in power would *per se* have constituted too much of an admission. For Estes Kefauver won nationwide applause when his TV programs were exposing corruption and tie-ins with crime on the part of some public officials.

Moreover, not only did he persist in his damaging exposures but he also had the temerity to run against Mr. Truman (and defeat him) in New Hampshire. In the course of his efforts in his own and on his party's behalf he braved the deepest of New England snows and sweltering midwest heat waves. He came to the convention with the largest number of votes of any candidate, having piled up an impressive series of primary victories in many states. If he had won second place on the ticket, it would have been a fitting reward and one considerably supported by public sentiment.

Mr. Stevenson and the party leaders decided otherwise for their own good reasons. Mr. Truman's opposition may have been an important factor. On the positive side the Democrats preferred a man who would clearly constitute a symbol of the solid South. A border state would not do. Refusal to subscribe to the full Civil Rights plank of the 1948 platform was not enough. Estes Kefauver did not qualify.

Senator Sparkman's record on civil rights and the general attitude of the South on other crucial questions have somewhat dampened the enthusiasm of many Democrats for their new ticket. But aside from this one key issue (if it can be set aside) the Alabama Senator has an enviable record on domestic and foreign legislation. He is counted on, if elected, to facilitate passage through Congress of his administration's bills. Sparkman of Alabama was chosen for harmony's sake.

## NEXT WEEK

JOHN MCKEON writes about the decline of Spanish civilization in the American Southwest.

"The Archdiocese of Santa Fe is dotted with ruined missions that for architectural beauty put to shame the better-publicized ones of Southern California. But of all of them the noblest is that of Our Lady of the Angels. When we reached the shattered walls we paused in silence to look around. Over all that pueblo and countryside the air of *lachrymae rerum* hangs heavy, but never so much as on a winter's day of leave-taking Over the same ground on which we stood Coronado had led his horsemen into the pueblo, the ancient home of the now vanished Tewa Indian Nation. . . ."

### *SEES ALL, HEARS ALL*

THE people and their political leaders, as millions of sleepy-eyed Americans could testify last week, can put on a wonderful show when they want to. With the party conventions, TV came of age and demonstrated once and for all that Milton Berle and the Libby pineapple juice commercial have been telling only half the television story. Last week even die-hard anti-TV partisans were crowding the bars or calling on their neighbors.

Never before was America able to see itself in action so clearly. Chicago, last week and during the Republican meeting, was a mirror of this many-



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voiced, many-sided nation. At times the windy oratory and tomfoolery of the conventioneers were oppressive. The simulated, and stimulated, enthusiasm of demonstrations were often patently phoney —and wearying. But these were inevitable, and the conventions would have been that much less a reflection of our national character without them. Even Betty Furness, calm and cool but busy selling refrigerators and television sets every time history let up for a few minutes, supplied a typical ingredient.

For a few wonderful days America was able through TV to get a good look at its leaders. Who will ever forget Tom Dewey's face at the moment Senator Dirksen chastized him for twice leading the Republicans to defeat, or the frenzy of scholarly Paul Douglas shouting for the floor until he was hoarse, or Jim Farley moving confidently and urbanely from group to group, or the dramatic scenes of the President and the new Democratic nominee waiting, in the early hours of the morning, to go in and meet the crowd?

But more interesting and rewarding in the long run were the scenes of the delegates themselves, who in their plainness and variety well stood for the millions they were representing. It was these men and women—as close in a country of this size as we can come to The People—who had the final word. The TV cameras, mercilessly focused on them for hours at a time, put it beyond question that they were very much like the rest of us. Those of us in front of our TV sets were given silent assurance from time to time that as long as the decisions continued to rest with people like them the rest of us were safe. TV showed us ourselves, and generally we liked what we saw.

### EVITA

IF, to say so mildly, it is going far to decree that all members of the Peron party shall wear black ties at all official functions henceforth, there can be no doubt that the late Eva Peron was much beloved throughout Argentina. She is deeply mourned.

At first the sympathy she evoked may not have gone very deep. It was based on her youth and beauty and the admiration that so often comes when a person rockets up from nowhere to become a great celebrity (the Cinderella element). It was the sort of public glamor and esteem which the favorites and wives of kings and strong men often enjoy. Eva Peron dressed and acted the part.

Only as her ambitions for herself and Colonel Juan Peron began to unfold—along with her immediate shrewdness and her extraordinary political talents—did she begin to exercise a sway over the hearts of great numbers of her compatriots. It was partly hyper-efficient public relations, partly the building up of substantial labor and welfare organizations, on her part. It was even her success in persuading vast numbers of the citizenry personally to partake in her avowed adoration of her husband, the chief of state, and her patriotic enthusiasm for his grandiose plans.

Now that her meteoric career has abruptly ended, it may be fitting to assay, not only the skill with which she put things over, but the principal results: near-destruction of the once-profitable farm-based Argentine economy; destruction of academic freedom, genuine labor unions and of *La Prensa* and other distinguished organs of independent public opinion, etc., etc., to bring about an unopposed one-party State. And all this will tend to be solidified by Evita's death at thirty-three, at the very peak of her extraordinary career. For now the government, when necessary, will plead that it must be true to her sacred memory.

But to give credit where it is due, we should recognize that Eva Peron was remarkably successful in making the individual citizen feel that his personal well-being was the government's impassioned concern—perhaps considerably more so than in any contemporary welfare state. This is something more than a tribute to a success-technique.

### AN IRREPARABLE LOSS

FEW Americans in public life have taken so to heart the threat to human existence embodied in atomic fission than Senator Brien McMahon. His untimely death constitutes a national loss.

As a lay expert who boned up on the subject after Hiroshima Senator McMahon was in the forefront of those who urged American concentration on the development and production of atomic weapons. Congress adopted his bill to take atomic energy development from the military and put it under civilian control. As he saw it, our headstart in A- and H-bombs gave this country no lasting security but only a short breathing space.

Accordingly he advocated adequate defense preparations of a general sort. He was also a moving spirit in last year's resolution of friendship addressed to the Russian people. He was likewise a strong advocate of worldwide disarmament and international arms control. To bring peace and well-being to the world he advocated a long-range program of foreign aid costing fifty billion dollars. Few citizens in these dark days have manifested a greater sense of responsibility. May he rest in peace.



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# IN GERMANY

THE plane landed in Amsterdam as the sun was setting. I was supposed to be in Germany the next day so I found a small hotel and spent the rest of the evening in the bar talking with the proprietors. They were a young couple with a growing family who are working very hard to make a go of things. Their hotel is as friendly as a cottage and so are they.

I complimented Madame on her English. Everywhere in Amsterdam people speak good English, but she told me that she had been a farm girl and grew up knowing only German and Dutch. "Then came the war, and I had to learn a lot of things. When there isn't much food and you have a houseful of babies you learn fast. English was only one of the courses I passed since 1939." That led to talk of the war.

My new friends lost a child in an air raid. Madame was alone when the planes came. She got the youngest and the oldest to a shelter and then went out to find their second son, then four years old. It was too late when she found him. Enough time has passed now so that they can talk about it.

I notice that when ex-soldiers talk about war it is the happy times, the absurdities, the safe adventures which stand out. With civilians it is different. They seem to remember only the uncertainties and horrors. My Dutch friends had unrelieved bitter memories of the war years. And they had bitter memories of the Germans. Story after story piled up as they told of the years of Nazi occupation.

During the next days in Germany I was tempted to repeat some of the stories I heard in that little Amsterdam hotel. My German friends had stories too, but with a different emphasis. We took a long automobile ride and passed many ruins. "Look, that was a fine school. All gone now. There are plans to build a new one there, but it won't be as good as the one the Americans destroyed." "Over there, that was a lovely little church. We used to stop there when we took this trip before the war." "If it were still standing we could take you to a museum they used to have in this place." Churches, schools, museums, hospitals—on a long trip the number is large. I began to feel a little uncomfortable.

No one ever pointed out the ruins of a munitions factory or steel mill. I was a guest and courtesy forbade my mentioning levelled schools, orphanages and churches in other places. I could not very well mention sights I had seen elsewhere in Europe: they knew all about them and apparently they had consciously decided to keep them out of mind.

At Cologne about one-third of the cathedral is still boarded off and stained glass windows are missing. Everywhere we turned there was some gaping reminder of Allied air raids. It seemed that my hosts were determined not to let any pass unnoticed.

No one mentioned Hitler, the concentration camps, the aggressive beginnings of the war, the Nazi conquests, the brutal occupation for five long years of almost all Western Europe. It was as if all that was not here evident, as the fearful destruction of Germany clearly was even after seven years, had been blotted out of existence, not only as a memory but as a fact.

You get the feeling in Germany that this is the way things are. History has been turned into a very selective documentation of the recent past, and all that remains is the memory of the frenzied Allies bombing their way to victory, leaving behind them broken bodies, broken buildings, cultural ruins wherever they went.

Now—according to the impression I got—these same furious warriors, in the West, see the error of their ways. They see that Germany was right, very right, in being anti-Communist and anti-Russian all along. They may not admit it but secretly they wish that Germany had defeated Russia and that they were not burdened in the present struggle with a Germany in ruins. They have had to learn the hard way what Germany could have told them about Russia a decade or more ago. Now they want Germany on their side. To win German support they are wooing her, flattering her, filling her stores and shops full of goods.

They are like secretly penitent but still stubborn children who have finally realized the wisdom of their elders. Innocence more than wickedness explains why they have left Germany without strength or power to meet Armageddon.

Well, Germany will go along with the game since that is the way it must be. There is even a strange satisfaction in the irony of the situation. With the past so horrible and the future so uncertain, there are certain advantages in the American-made material prosperity of the present. But the "children" from America have not suddenly become wise and responsible.

I was there during the Republican convention, and I was reminded that at that late date Americans were still debating whether or not they intended to stay in Europe. How, I was asked, can a German feel safe in betting on American consistency and purpose?

It is not hard to get agreement on the inevitability of World War III in Germany. The real tragedy, many feel, is that the final showdown must be under the direction of the political rustics from the United States.

JOHN COGLEY.



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# A New Christian Society

**THE GREAT OBSTACLE IS THAT CHRISTIANS FAIL TO UNDERSTAND THE DEPTH AND VITALITY OF THEIR OWN TRADITION**

CHRISTOPHER DAWSON

CULTURE by itself—even a humanist culture that is intellectually aware of the spiritual values of Christianity—does not possess the power of restoring or transforming the life of society. It provides standards of value, intellectual and aesthetic appreciation, the development of the power of criticism, width of knowledge and detachment from the prejudices and errors both of the multitude and of the ruling class. All this Matthew Arnold had—like his contemporaries Renan and Sainte-Beuve in France, or Emerson and Henry James and Henry Adams in America, all of them superior people who stood aside on their intellectual eminence and watched the stream of life go by. They none of them had the religious attitude toward life, though they all realized how important it was to have it. They lacked faith and therefore they failed to gain men's sympathies and even aroused conscious or unconscious antagonism.

This is why the utilitarians, the apostles of useful knowledge and applied science, have been their superiors in the educational field, though their views were often so much more narrow and superficial. They had a simple naive faith in the value of concrete objective knowledge which they communicated to others. And this created a bond of sympathy between utilitarian high-brows like Bentham and Mill and hard-headed practical men like Francis Place.

In the past, in a Christian society, the leaders of culture were just as critical of the views and behavior of common humanity as were the modern humanists. But even the most high-brow of Christian teachers, such as Pascal and Newman, stood on common ground with the common people before the supreme mystery of faith.

> God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob
> Not of the philosophers and men of learning
> God of Jesus Christ
> Deum meum et Deum vestrum.

The mystery of faith brings all men together at the heart of life, and it reduces the differences of culture, in the humanist sense of the word, to comparative insignificance.

Faith is therefore the beginning and end of Christian culture as it is the beginning and end of Christian morals. This is common to all forms of Christianity, Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant; only in so far as the conception of faith differs is there also a difference in the conception of culture. Indeed I do not think it is too far-fetched to suggest that the essential difference between the Catholic and Protestant conceptions of the relation of religion and culture is bound up with their respective conceptions of the relation of faith and works, the famous controversy which above all others divided the Churches at the Reformation. For just as the Catholics taught that there was a vital, organic, inseparable relation between faith and works, as against the Protestant view of justification by faith alone, so too in the Catholic view there is an organic relation between religion and culture, which the Protestant view does not as a rule recognize. And this I think is one of the main causes for that indifference of modern Protestantism to culture, which was the burden of Matthew Arnold's controversial writings—the grimness and grayness of certain aspects of English and American life in the nineteenth century and the indifference of the most religious sections of English and American society to the cause of higher education.

TODAY this is a thing of the past. The harsh and ugly subculture of Victorian industrialism, with its combination of unlimited acquisitiveness with narrow pietism, has no defenders, and the reaction against Puritanism has carried England and the United States to the opposite extreme of an extroverted hedonistic mass culture. But some things have been carried over from one extreme to the other without much change, and the most important of these are the contempt for ideas and the indifference to humane culture, which are hardly less characteristic of the mass man of today than of the individualistic Philistines of yesterday.

The latter, even though they were themselves men of genuine religious faith and moral earnestness, were the

This article forms a part of "Understanding Europe," Mr. Dawson's new book, to be published by Sheed and Ward early in September.



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destroyers of the Christian tradition of culture, and their successors have filled the void with a materialist pseudo-culture which is the real opium of the people, since it is at once a drug and an intoxicant and a poison.

For modern civilization today seems to be following the same road as the ancient world under the Roman Empire; on the one hand, a vast development of material resources and luxury—above all luxury for the masses—bread and games and baths and theatres; on the other, the vast development of power—the overwhelming pressure of unlimited power, concentrated in the hands of the masters of the world. But in our case the danger is greater, because our power and resources are incomparably greater, and because the tradition we are losing is not that of the pagan city-state, but that of Christendom.

Neverthless this gloomy parallel is not altogether a hopeless one. For the decline of the classical culture and the growth of the massive power of the world state did not actually produce in the long run a materialist culture. It was followed by a sudden escape of humanity into a new spiritual dimension, the discovery of a new spiritual world and the acquisition of a new spiritual freedom. It was the age of Tiberius and Nero that saw the coming of Christianity, and the breakdown of the giant fabric of the world state in the third century was followed by the rise of the new Christian culture .

The present crisis of our civilization can only be solved by a similar process of radical conversion and spiritual transformation. Hard as it may be to see the possibility of this, it is no less difficult to believe in the possibility of indefinite progress along the present line to some robot utopia. Indeed the catastrophes of the last thirty years are not only a sign of the bankruptcy of secular humanism, they also go to show that a completely secularized civilization is inhuman in the absolute sense—hostile to human life and irreconcilable with human nature itself. For as I have tried to explain in *The Judgment of the Nations,* the forces of violence and aggressiveness that threaten to destroy our world are the direct result of the starvation and frustration of man's spiritual nature.

For a time Western civilization managed to live on the normal tradition of the past, maintained by a kind of sublimated humanitarian idealism. But this was essentially a transitional phenomenon, and as humanism and humanitarianism fade away, we see societies more and more animated by the blind will to power which drives them on to destroy one another and ultimately themselves. Civilization can only be creative and life-giving in the proportion that it is spiritualized. Otherwise the increase of power inevitably increases its power for evil and its destructiveness.

Therefore it is only by the rediscovery of the spiritual world and the restoration of man's spiritual capacities that it is possible to save humanity from self-destruction. This is the immense task which Christian education has to undertake. It involves a great deal more than any Christian or any educationalist has yet realized. And this is inevitable because we are dealing with unknown factors which lie beyond our horizon of vision, below our level of consciousness and above the capacity of our reason: in other words the problem concerns the future, the human soul and God: three things which we cannot understand. For this reason, modern man, who has been accustomed to living in a world which is scientifically known and technologically controlled, is in a worse position for dealing with the ultimate religious problems than his ancestors, who were at every turn faced with mysterious forces over which they had no control and who consequently felt an obvious immediate, practical sense of dependence on the power and assistance of God.

But this does not mean that we ought to acquiesce, as some modern Christian thinkers are inclined to do, in the complete incomprehensibility and otherness of Faith —in a dualism of religion and culture which leaves no room for Christian education. The greater is our knowledge of nature and man and history, the greater is the obligation to use these increased resources for God, not merely in the way of moral action, but intellectually also, by the re-interpretation of the tradition of Christian culture in terms of the new knowledge, and by relating the instruments of culture to their true spiritual end.

AT present there is a great danger that the part of culture should be undervalued and neglected both in the religious and the educational spheres. In the latter there is a tendency to sacrifice the humanities to science and technology; in the former there is the theological dualism to which I have just referred, which finds its most striking expression in the Barthian return to the theology of Luther and Calvin presented in a new dialectical form.

Both these tendencies in their different ways are unfavorable to the traditional Christian culture and to the old discipline of studies which was conceived as an ascending scale of humanity, philosophy, and divinity. The disintegration of higher education into a mass of divergent speculations coordinated only by motives of economic and political interest is fatal an any ideal of culture, and if, as is sometimes the case, religious knowledge is treated as one of these independent specialisms, it is even more fatal to religion. The recovery of a Christian culture is therefore the essential educational and religious task, and it is inseparable from the social ideal of Christendom—of the Christian people—*plebs Christiana—populus Dei.*

This ideal which has become so pale and remote to the individualism and secularism of the nineteenth century, and indeed of the whole modern world, lies at



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the very heart of Christianity. It was equally present in the Middle Ages when Christendom was a triumphant world culture and in the days when Christianity was a persecuted underground movement, but when nevertheless Christians were conscious of being a new people, "a third race" on whose heads the ends of the world were come.

If from the standpoint of the Roman man of the world, these Christians were an uneducated lot of barbarians, we must remember that they were in reality just as much the heirs of a tradition of culture as the cultivated Hellenist, and that they brought into the tired and sophisticated civilization of the Roman Empire the accumulated treasures of a profound spiritual experience which was on a different plane of reality from anything that Greece and Rome had known.

In the modern world there is a similar tradition of sacred culture which it has been the mission of the Church to nourish and preserve. However secularized our modern civilization may become, this sacred tradition remains like a river in the desert, and a genuine religious education can still use it to irrigate the thirsty lands and to change the face of the world with the promise of new life. The great obstacle is the failure of Christians themselves to understand the depth of that tradition and the inexhaustible possibilities of new life that it contains.

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***FROM GERMANY***

# The Revival of a Stricken Giant

THIS summer Germany supplies living proof that the words "impossible" and "never" do not exist in political life. For in 1945 Germany was prostrate, helpless, seemingly unable ever to rise again from the ashes of her flattened cities and the general atmosphere of chaos. Millions of refugees were without food and clothing; what paper money there was had become valueless and had been replaced for all practical purposes by cigarettes.

Today Germany is fast becoming the first power in Europe; an amazing economic recovery has taken place. To appreciate how the living standards of the average German have improved one has only to look at the crowds at the railway stations, at sports events, public gatherings and fashionable summer resorts. And this despite low salaries and poor wages, the thousands in the refugee camps still unable to find gainful employment and the contrast between the great wealth of a few and the poverty of the German masses.

At the same time there are evidences of a new, hectic and somewhat artificial cultural life: experimental theaters, meetings of professional associations, fellowships for scientific work. Almost all of the many new books being published are well printed on good paper and well bound. There are still ruined buildings but many new ones as well, among which are a disproportionately large number of department stores and lavish insurance offices.

Yet grumbling and complaints about everything and everybody are common; dissatisfaction with German and foreign politics is rife. Many go about with long faces: "We work only for the Soviet conqueror, who sooner or later will take over. The Americans will drop us. What you see is very deceptive; economic collapse is just around the corner. Political chaos is inevitable, for our politicians are far below average and corruption is widespread."

All this, which is often said in the form of confidences, has a certain basis in fact. There are dark possibilities and dark realities as well. Much of the present structure is so flimsy that it would collapse at its first test. There is no denying, just the same, that Germany's power and energy are beginning to cast their shadows over Western Europe.

It is fortunate that the hope, expressed by an American diplomat, that the New Germany will not be either a national socialist or a socialist state stands to be fulfilled. Germans have learned from experience. When a Bavarian schoolteacher (unhappily a Catholic) suggested a revival of racial feeling, at an America House discussion, the German audience protested violently. Students are giving vent to energetic protests against the new films of the producer of the old anti-Semitic Goebbels piece, "Jew Suess."

MANY meetings indicate that the idea of a United Europe exercises a strong popular appeal. Such universities as Bonn and Frankfurt have elected as rectors former victims of Nazi persecution. Martin Buber, the Jewish philosophical writer, has received a much coveted public prize.

The nationalistic groups are poorly organized; they have no strong or genuinely popular leaders. There are many signs that the younger generation regards nationalistic megalomania with skepticism, as it is suspicious of all propaganda. In their desire for peace and better living conditions, many Germans would oppose all adventurers and all pleas for expansion and German domination.

Unfortunately that is not the whole picture. There is plenty of cause for anxiety, too. I do not think that the greatest danger lies in the core of unrepentant Nazis and their uncritical and embittered followers, who play a leading role in the SRP (Socialistic Imperial Party) of General Remer—a man who made his name by sup-



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pressing the anti-Hitler attempt of June 1944.

This group—or its successor if the SRP is declared illegal by the German Supreme Court—may win as many as fifteen per cent of the votes in the next elections. But that is not nearly as ominous as the widespread view that everything started fresh in 1945. Hitler's sins are not mentioned and it is held tactless to mention what led to Germany's catastrophic defeat. In contrast, the shortcomings and ill-deeds of the Allies dominate all discussions.

Moreover, the Germans claim that they knew everything in advance; they were always aware of the Bolshevik menace. The 1922 Treaty of Rapallo and the 1939 deal between Ribbentrop and Molotov are conveniently forgotten.

The emphasis is on the American atrocities committed in Germany after 1945. The millions of victims of Nazism before that and the systematized cruelties of the camps of the Third Reich are mentioned only in a most perfunctory way. Few Germans take seriously such efforts toward historical perspective as are embodied in the lectures of Romano Guardini, with their emphasis on the injustices committed against the Jews. There are even professors who preach that the Slavic peoples must be dominated by the racially superior Germans. People dwell on the deficiencies of the postwar trials of the German war criminals and forget that the Nazis used human beings for medical experimentation.

THE trend toward Allied cooperation with Germany and the plan for German contingents in the European Army only increase the cynicism of the nationalists: "The American talk about freedom and moral principles is sheer propaganda—only considerations of power matter to them. Yesterday they denounced German militarism; today they impose militarism on us." Despite all the Germans who have visited the United States after the war at American expense, there are many who entertain the strangest views about everything American. We are roundly criticized, in oversimplified terms, for our materialism and positivism.

Distribution of American money for cultural purposes creates plenty of problems. There is a genuine fear that organizations with no particulary useful function will be formed in order to spend the American funds. But the empty criticism that one often hears is that such grants are proofs of imperialistic expansion; they do not indicate any real interest in Germany on America's part. At the same time these critics boast that "in the future only one thing will be permitted the United States in Germany—to pay, to give us money, which we will spend as we like."

Adversaries of nationalism are roundly denounced as bad Germans: the *Rheinische Merkur,* for example, when it tried to draw up a European solution for the Saar problem. It is considered unpatriotic to discuss the present influence of former Nazis, some of whom receive preferential treatment in certain business circles. Many Germans do not like this, either, but their opposition is not energetic enough. Too many patriotic but not nationalistic Germans remain fearfully or disdainfully aloof from public life.

At present, of course, German policies are quite reasonable. Chancellor Adenauer really wants to make Germany a partner of the West. As a Christian he is hostile to all exaggerated nationalism precisely because he realizes where Germany's true potentialities lie. He favors reunification of Germany. But he believes that it can come about only with the help of the West. While he is not inexorably opposed to them, he is highly skeptical of possible negotiations with the USSR. His long experience as mayor of Cologne has made him a highly skilled tactician, if perhaps a little too inclined to believe that every man has his price.

Dr. Adenauer is a public servant who believes that an élite is the best instrument for effecting the well-being of the people. His political experience has led him to place more faith in experts than in the whims of public opinion. He is not a popular figure but one who is more and more respected for his unflagging activity, his ability to maneuver and his ingenuity in overcoming difficulties that appear to be insurmountable. He is expected to obtain ratification of the peace contract with the West and parliamentary assent to German participation in the setting up of a European Army (unless the Supreme Court blocks that development).

ADENAUER'S opposition is rather helpless. Few persons take nationalist and Communist agitation very seriously. The Social Democrats under Herr Schumacher, who is bitter and quite ill, are not sure of themselves. They offer no alternatives. In their hearts they have no confidence in negotiations with the Soviet Union. Privately they will even admit that the limitations now placed upon German sovereignty are not unbearable.

But Schumacher is a bitterly disappointed man. In his role as leader of the national opposition he fails to realize that his nationalistic demagogy can only succeed in helping other groups. Adenauer's pro-Western policy is more likely to win out.

Anyone with an ear to the ground, however, is aware of certain rumblings which are not dangerous so long as Adenauer is alive and active. But he is an old man. Who else is there to hold the parties of the majority together—with the support of both industrialists and labor unions? And will a strong Germany remain content to be only a member of the team?

There is always a danger that new adventurers will



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take advantage of the weaknesses of the public-spirited élites and the political indifference of the masses. Will Western Germany be content to look on as Eastern Germany is more and more bolshevized.? There are many possibilities, but I do not see how Ambassador Kennan's dream of a Germany as strong as she was in 1913 and yet satisfied with her lot can be realized.

A visit to Germany this summer brings to mind many things. There is the forgotten French book with the title, *German Uncertainties*. There is what the late historian, Stadelmann, had to say of Von Tirpitz and his program of naval rearmament: Tirpitz never realized that his program could result in a clash with England; he was a technician interested in building up a strong navy without being aware of the consequences.

Germany is working feverishly, admirably hard. She has been repaid for her industry and for overcoming desperate conditions. Others will follow her. She is fortunate to have at the helm an industrious, reasonable man who knows what is possible today and to whom all grandiose dreams are alien. Adenauer may represent only the Germany of the present movement, a Germany in transition, not yet fully recovered from its downfall in 1945. Or he might be the first of a line of political leaders who will carry on his policies in the future.

Will his successors in any case be able to take the measure of overwrought emotions, to win out over demagogues, as Adenauer has won out over Schumacher? Will they thus be able to eschew giant projects which collapse after initial spectacular successes?

It is too early to give a confident answer. We may only hope that the present American policy of energetic support of the revival of Germany will prove to have been a well-calculated risk.

WALDEMAR GURIAN.

# THE SCREEN

### *IS THERE A DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE?*

IT has become obvious that movie makers are never going to satiate their desire to make films about doctors and things medical. Perhaps there is something about a man or woman swathed in white (with expressive eyes peeking out and with well-poised knife in rubber-gloved hands), or about gleaming white corridors down which young interns scurry, that smells more of drama than formaldehyde to the movie people. In any case, they can't leave the subject alone.

Recently M-G-M, the company who gave us the famous Dr. Kildare (who with the help of Dr. Gillespie practically invented psychosomatic medicine), turned up with "The Girl in White." This glossy film version of the autobiography of Dr. Emily Dunning Barringer traced the struggles of a woman doctor at the turn of the century—a pioneer whose perseverance helped to pave the way for others of her sex who felt that there was an important place for women in medicine.

The very fact that June Allyson portrayed Emily was a dead give-away that things would work out all right in the end in spite of adversities and discouragements. The older woman doctor (Mildred Dunnock) who inspired Emily was not herself sure if she'd do it over again since bigotry allowed her to be little more than a glorified midwife. The chief doctor (Cary Merrill) at the hospital where Emily interned was definitely set against her. The other interns were antagonistic. One of the young doctors (Arthur Kennedy) fell in love with Emily, and, although she had the warmest feelings for him, she seemed to think marriage and careers don't mix—a mistaken idea that further complicated her extremely complicated life. Even moviegoers who hadn't read Dr. Barringer's book, *Bowery to Bellevue,* knew that June Allyson would conquer all problems. At the finale, we don't exactly hear wedding bells but they're in the offing; and as a doctor Emily has won everyone's admiration.

A WOMAN doctor, exceedingly well played by Googie Withers, has the leading role in "White Corridors," a melodrama sent over from England—evidently so they too can get in the non-stop films-about-doctors cycle. Although Googie proves to be a very good surgeon (there's even the inevitable scene with her taking over the operation when the senior surgeon fails) "White Corridors" by no means concentrates on her. It is a sort of hospital *Grand Hotel* affair, crowded with characters and interwoven sub-plots that make this particular hospital seem like the busiest place on earth.

"White Corridors," adapted from Helen Ashton's novel *Yoeman's Hospital,* is a long film, and while you may get fed up on its life-in-a-hospital theme, it has an authentic atmosphere that holds your interest. Furthermore the involved plots, well directed by Pat Jackson, build up to a good suspense and have a certain morbid fascination in spite of the fact that it is hard to believe that there could be so much intrigue and coincidence in one building.

LORETTA Young appears in a hospital uniform in her new picture too, not as a doctor, but as a Gray Lady. Playing the title role in "Paula," she takes on this assignment partly to take her mind off herself after she loses her second child at birth and partly to be near the little orphan (Tommy Rettig) for whose brain injury she feels responsible. Poor Paula! Seldom has a woman suffered so much in one movie. It is true that her auto hit this little boy. But the whole thing was an



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accident; and she was not a drunken driver, although she was so accused by the truck driver who snatched up the child after the accident and rushed him to the hospital.

Overcome by guilt, Paula works as a Gray Lady, and later she and her husband (Kent Smith) take the youngster home to care for him, to help him regain his speech and perhaps to adopt him. When the boy finally recognizes Paula, his only motive for learning how to speak again is to accuse her. In spite of the fact that this plot is straight soap opera, Director Rudolph Mate has given it some Grade A treatment, and Miss Young and her supporting cast, which also includes Alexander Knox as a sympathetic and wise doctor, manage to keep you interested even when you don't quite believe all that's going on.

JUST to prove that all new films don't have to do with doctors and healing, there's "The Story of Will Rogers," which should be perfect fare for admirers of the famous humorist. I'm not sure that today's bobby-soxers or yesterday's sophisticates will take too kindly to this lengthy film about a man whose forte was wholesome, homespun fun. Will's motto: "I never met a man I didn't like," sets the keynote for the movie which is nostalgic, pleasant and completely unassuming. Will Rogers, Jr. portrays his father well, and, thanks to Director Michael Curtiz, without any amateurishness or coy mannerisms that could have sweetened the story to the point of nausea. Jane Wyman turns in a nice restrained performance as Will's patient and loving wife, and the large supporting cast, which includes Eddie Cantor as himself, is good. The plot is an American success story; and if this particular hero is up your alley, you'll have a grand time—laughing and crying through the years.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

# COMMUNICATIONS

## "TOO FAR RIGHT"

Berkeley, Calif.

TO the Editors: For the past year or more, I've been aware—increasingly so—of The Commonweal's trend toward the right, editorially speaking. Evidently, as a result of your circulation drive, you believe you have picked up several more conservative readers and must, therefore, make some little appeal to them. The trouble with such policy, in the context of latterday politics, is that the further right you go, the less liberal of necessity you become. But, The Commonweal seemingly has chosen its way and, increasingly, it is not my way.

What are the evidences of these easily discerned slanting, of this new voice in The Commonweal's inner editorial councils?

A number of ridiculous editorials on the former Kuomintang government in China—one even going so far as to state that Chiang's government was a democracy. Quite evidently our respective versions of the term democracy differ, differ so widely that I can no longer regard The Commonweal as a liberal magazine.

I might also note under this point The Commonweal's complete failure to make some mention of the *Reporter* series on the China Lobby. Strange that such a Lobby, as bad in its way (not, of course in extent, even depth) as the International Communist conspiracy, has been no object of The Commonweal's wrath. Contrarily, it offered its pages to one Freda Utley to further perpetrate her version (differing in no respect from that of the China Lobby and/or Senator McCarthy's) of the "truth" about Chiang's fall. Mr. Hinton's article was no reply to Miss Utley's—they seemingly were not given the same topic to write upon.

During the past year or so, there have also been several derogatory references to Mr. Lattimore—one particularly that I remember categorized him as "the ominous Mr. Lattimore." No evidence was given as to why he was "ominous"—the accusation evidently resting solely on Senator McCarthy's accusation.

A defamatory mention, quite recently, of the American Civil Liberties Union—whose version of democracy, incidentally, more nearly approximates my own.

Constant editorializings to the effect that American liberals all share a collective guilt with Mr. Hiss. As you by now know, New York City isn't quite the universe or even a major part thereof. Mr. Viereck's amateurish, self-conscious prose to me lacks conviction—he writes seemingly to sell forthcoming books. I find great difficulty in seeing how his comments are pertinent to anything in reality.

Then there was Mr. Buckley's article. Does The Commonweal seriously believe that Mr Buckley speaks for the average Republican—or for that matter anyone except himself and Mr. Moley? Mr. Buckley's world is medieval—he believes there should be no government relief until people are actually starving to death. Why, indeed, should an erstwhile liberal magazine aid in propagating his bits of calculated hysteria—his proper medium is the one he's working for.

Your movie editor's extraneous dragging in of the fact that a movie writer recently testified before the Un-American Activities Committee. Perhaps, though, it is the proper way to become popular with the right.



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Mr. Downing's recent article (I consider Mr. Downing your most able writer, certainly your most moving) seemingly accusing myriad teachers with being arch-leftists, of warping easily warped minds toward Stalinism. Again—New York is not America.

I don't expect my reading material to always have to agree with me in all particulars. I merely observe that The Commonweal, within the last year, has become a different magazine—not the one I had always thought it to be, not the one I've been recommending to my friends, my students, and, unfortunately, decidedly not the magazine I want it to be. The Commonweal's new stable of writers seem to have been acquired to align the magazine with what the editors have recently divined to be the neo-reactionary trend of latterday America. Now, of all times, must "liberal" magazines be strident, not disinterested, recreant. There is no longer any lay Catholic voice of the left; McCarranism's rampancy remains unchallenged.

NAME WITHHELD
BY REQUEST.

## "WHO ARE THE SUBVERSIVES?"

Detroit, Mich.

TO the Editors: Those who criticize the National Education Association are not neccessarily "enemies of our schools and our children"—even though the National Education Association has done its best to foster this impression. Nor is it true that criticism of the National Education Association is a criticism of the teaching profession itself.

In stating (in an editorial, July 18 issue) that the American Legion Magazine attacked "American teachers" and that in it "the profession is denounced as a propaganda force for Socialism," The Commonweal editors show that they have naively fallen for this standard National Education Association line. The American Legion Magazine article is an attack upon certain "progressive" educators whose theories are (as is well known) philosophically unsound as well as radically incompatible with any traditional form of Judaeo-Christian belief. It is also an attack upon the dominant National Education Association policy. Even if we choose to take a more benign interpretation of the facts presented in the Legion Magazine article, we surely cannot dismiss the criticism in so cavalier a fashion.

Only the most unperceptive can fail to be aware that the dominant force in educational circles today is a militant secular humanism. This is apparent not only in the calibre of the indoctrination that goes on in teacher-training colleges but even in such seemingly irenic publications as the National Education Association's statement on "Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public School." (My own documentation for these assertions can be found in a series of articles in the *Newman Review* for the First, Second and Third Quarters of 1951 and the First Quarter of 1952.)

As for the "Socialist" charge, the Legion Magazine article nowhere makes the accusation that "the profession" is "a propaganda force for Socialism." The author does however quote a more than sufficiently damning passage from the "Proceedings of the Seventy-Second Annual Meeting of the National Education Association." What is even more significant is a fact that the Legion Magazine writer does not mention—the fact that the man who made that statement was Willard E. Givens, who until this very year has been National Executive Secretary of the National Education Association.

The least that can be said in this matter is that those of us who object to Socialism or who have scruples about secular humanism ought to have the privilege of voicing our criticism without becoming the target of The Commonweal's "moral indignation." This attitude of The Commonweal is in fact very disillusioning. In view of the fact that The Commonweal is often so courageous in things Catholic, we cannot believe that the editors mean to stifle criticism of the National Education Association. Of course it may be that the editors simply got their data from National Education Association's spokesmen rather than from reading the Legion Magazine itself. We hope so. The only interpretation would be that the editors of The Commonweal are so conditioned to the easy dichotomies of uncritical liberal thought that they have fallen for the standard National Education Association's line of branding its critics as fascistic liberals who are enemies of our schools and our children.

(REV.) JAMES J. MAGUIRE, C.S.P.

*We are in full accord with Father Maguire's thesis that critics of the "National Education Association are not necessarily 'enemies of our schools and our children' ", and we agree with his criticism of the tendencies toward a dogmatic secular humanism in the nation's schools. Indeed, the editors of The Commonweal have been emphatic in their own criticism of these tendencies.*

*We regret, therefore, that Father Maguire interpreted our editorial "Who Are the 'Subversives'?" as a defense of such tendencies in American educational circles, or an attack upon those who legitimately oppose them. To have made such an attack would have been to attack our own stated convictions. Our intention in the editorial was to criticize certain self-appointed pressure groups which have been making political, rather than properly philosophical, attacks on the teaching profession. We were, and are, disturbed over the tendency to attack teachers as "unAmerican" because of their support for such "liberal" ideals as the UN or an internationalist*



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*foreign policy. The evidence for the growth of such attacks is real, and it was our concern over these, rather than an uncritical support of N.E.A. policy, which motivated our editorial.*

*Like Father Maguire we shall continue to oppose the imposition of secularism and moral relativism, disguised as "Americanism," in the nation's schools. We shall also continue to oppose the imposition of narrowly partisan political concepts under the same guise.*

THE EDITORS.

# OF NOTE

## THE NATURE OF MARRIAGE

THE July-August issue of *Blackfriars,* the monthly review edited by the English Dominicans (34 Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.1.), carries an article entitled "Human Reproduction," by Mark Brocklehurst, O.P. The following is an excerpt:

> In some matters the teaching of the Church finds a ready and willing response in the world at large; pronouncements of the Pope will be listened to attentively, and applauded and accepted. In some spheres the Church enjoys a position of respect and influence. But that is true only of matter in which the teaching of the Church and the aspirations and mood of the world are already in harmony. The Church even leads in matters where the world is in a mood to be led. One of the great exceptions, perhaps the greatest, is in everything connected with sexual morality and human reproduction. And here the mood of the world and the teaching of the Church are diametrically opposed. . . .
>
> The practical problem is not merely to understand, and be able to "prove," the Church's teaching. We have to discover a wave-length, an idiom, that makes our convictions intelligible. The tragedy is that the truth which would save the world and society is rejected, not always out of malice, but because it fails to evoke a response; it does not impinge on people's lives. It comes to them like a curiosity out of the past that is equally irrelevant whether it is true or false. For our comfort we know that the gospel preached with Faith, Hope and Charity, though it will be rejected here and there out of malice, will always find a response. But perhaps to say that is no more than to repeat the problem: *to preach the gospel with Faith, Hope and Charity.*
>
> A good example of the difficulties and hindrances of language can be found in the phrase "the sanctity of marriage." Wherever the fault lies, the fact remains that there is a general impression that "holy matrimony" is a highly spiritual union, essentially restrictive, which on account of the restrictions is able to justify and tolerate sex simply because it is reduced to a minimum and made a mere utility. What the phrase actually means is that sex is holy. Matrimony is not a cloak to hide, but a pedestal to ennoble. All those things restricted and forbidden by Catholic teaching are not primarily restrictive because of a tendency to misuse, but are positive assertions as to the intrinsic value and special significance of human sexual reproduction. The word "holy" is used, not in the first instance because it is now a sacrament and as such is now under the proper authority of the Church; it is called "holy" because it is not quite in the same category as eating and drinking, but is more like birth and death which are not entirely of this world.
>
> Sometimes we are accused of not facing the realities and the necessities imposed on man by his lower nature. But the Church, with its Holy Matrimony, far from hiding or shying away from animal nature, is the only institution in the world today that takes a sexual view of marriage. Indeed, its whole doctrine is no more than a patient and thorough analysis of the one phrase: human sexual reproduction. On the other hand, it is the marriage reformers who do not give proper attention to the bodily nature of man .And if the phrase "the sanctity of marriage" is regarded with suspicion, the phrase "the breakdown of a marriage" is very revealing.
>
> We are told that when a "marriage has broken down" we ought to be realistic, and, after a proper legal process in which the causes will be investigated and weighed, the breakdown should be legalized. But such a phrase can be used only by people who turn their attention from the male-female nature of marriage and regard its essence as something like compatibility of temperament: a union of two people through love. Obviously a special kind of intimate love should be the motive and stay of married life. And that can break down. But when it does, it is not the marriage that has broken down. And the whole teaching and practice of the Church is, in general, that it is precisely the marriage union which still exists, and can and should be the motive and context of rekindling love.
>
> The gaze of the Church is direct and simple, and by contrast the gaze of the world is confused. Perhaps one of the causes of the confusion is animal passion, bodily sexual desire. The word is used to mean a simple physical fact, of itself amoral. Clearly such bodily dispositions are intended to be, in the designs of God, forces directing men and



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women towards marriage, i.e. to seek sexual union. Unfortunately, it is not a mere matter of words to distinguish between seeking sexual union and seeking satisfaction of bodily desires.

To seek satisfaction of bodily desire in sexual union is virtuous and holy; to seek sexual union in order to satisfy bodily desire is sub-human and immoral. The Church makes this distinction by keeping its gaze directed at the nature of sexual union. Sexual desire is not of the nature of sex, but is accidental to it. And the Church makes this distinction, not by casting its eyes up to heaven and exhorting us to rise *above* our animal nature and redeem our passions in the high spiritual purposes of the Divinity; the Church makes this distinction not by rising higher but by sinking lower. Full attention is given, not only to our lower nature but to our lowest nature. Sexual reproduction takes its rise, not in animal nature, but in vegetable nature. Indeed, sex is the pride and glory of plants. It is their highest and proper life and their whole existence is taken up with it. They flaunt their reproductive organs in a rich variety of shapes, colors and perfumes, and we adorn our houses with them. "Consider the lilies of the field. . . ."

When the Church teaches that the end of marriage is the reproduction of the species, she is only asserting what is a clearly observed fact of the universe. When that fact is lost sight of and *in its place* is put the good of the partners to the union, we are in error about the nature of sex, and are confusing it with the satisfaction of bodily desire or with human love; both belong to marriage but do not constitute its nature.

Animals and plants show forth in a remarkable degree this subjection of the needs of the individuals to the good of the species. It is sometimes said that the promiscuity of the animals would be a freedom that would be commendable, because more "natural", in man. But to say so is to ignore the more astonishing truth that it is anything but a freedom; anything but a self-seeking. An animal is bound by "marriage ties". It is imprisoned in its nature. Through its own blind instincts it is "married" to its kind. . . .

The state of human marriage is precisely the human counterpart to that, but, because human, it frees and does not enslave. An animal is possessed by its kind; a man possesses himself. Therefore *human* sexual reproduction will be a use of what is possessed, humanly, as a person. But as individuals we do not possess the powers of reproduction. It is our unique glory to be free persons among created things, but, in the matter of reproduction, it is also defect. Man is only half a being.

***FROM AUSTRIA***

# The Fourteenth of July

WE arrived in Innsbruck on the evening of Sunday, July 13th, to find the center of the town closed to all traffic. The arcaded streets around the little golden roof, and the great square before the Hof-Theater, were all brilliantly illuminated, and bedecked with tricolor flags: the flower-beds in the park were outlined in lights, and lights festooned the trees and pin-pricked the pools edges.

People were everywhere, groups in Tirolese national costume, men in the ordinary daily costume of *leaderhosen,* white cotton knee-high openwork socks and braided or velvet-bound jackets; women in their best, traditional or the latest mode, numberless tow-headed, excited small children. Drinks flowed freely: there was, astonishment, a milk bar; orange-pop and cokes were selling almost as fast as white wine and beer, at twelve cents for a big bottle of either.

And the occasion for all these junketings was the annual celebration of the Fall of the Bastille! How Andreas Hofer, the Tirolese patriot who died rather than yield to the all-conquering Napoleon, must be revolving non-stop in his grave, I thought. Every small Austrian (and German, too) learns the stirring folk song about him by heart: *"Zu Mantua in Banden,"* "To Mantua in bonds, Andreas Hofer came." And weeps a little at the end: "Dear Fatherland, *Adieu."* And yet . . . And yet for three days all Austria now celebrates the French national holiday, listens to French speeches, French bands playing French military music, watches French tanks roll by, as they did from seven to nine a.m. on the morning of the Fourteenth itself, watches French soldiers march the streets, without a trace of bitterness, *ressentiment* or any of the other grim complex of feelings usually occasioned by an army of occupation.

Indeed, among the warm, gay, enthusiastic, well-fed, well-dressed crowds there were only such approving comments as *"lustig" "gemutlich" "herrlich"* applied whether to fireworks, music, or marching tanks. Myself, I fear, could see nothing *lustig, gemutlich,* or *herrlich* about tanks named for old, unhappy wars. Malplaquet, Valmy, Verdun: as they rolled past each with two crouching figures and one kid standing, arms folded, who had never yet used a razor, I wished I had five or six sons or none, instead of a paltry three. But everyone to whom I spoke, from the old aristocracy to the shop-people, to the civil servants, to a young architect



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studying in Vienna, to clergy or peasantry, all agreed that the French had done a really good job, that the French administration was a good thing for Austria, that the occupation "worked well." Of course, here and there, someone's house or castle or villa is commandeered, and one naturally indignant Austrian proves the rule. But why, of all the occupations, *has* this worked?

ONE reason, at least, seems to be that the French have the old Latin respect for the conquered. *Debellere superbos* is still a valid concept, and the Austrians were not proud in 1945: they were too broken, and too hungry for that. (Even the Italians, whom the Austrians professionally dislike more than anyone except the Germans, made themselves quite popular as occupiers, during 1919, probably from a same Latinity.

Another reason is that after the horrors of Hitler, the Austrians were quite prepared to welcome any one of the Allies: and today in the face of the Iron Curtain, not a hundred miles away, they are more than ready to agree with the French proverb, *best is the enemy of good*: food is plentiful, unemployment is low; life is far more nearly back to normal than at any time between the two World Wars, so let us be thankful for small mercies.

But another explanation is perhaps the more serious: that the French and the Austrians are probably the most profoundly, rootedly Christian and Catholic peoples in Europe; the most essentially European, too, in their *Romanitas*. Nothing divides them: there is no racial or religious barrier of any sort; intermarriage is so completely accepted that the most chauvinistic French mothers accept Austrian daughters-in-law happily; and vice-versa.

In small things, too, there is much fraternizing: both French and Austrians love good food, and spend an unholy amount of time preparing it, eating it, and talking about it. Both are intensely artistic peoples, while the Austrians look up to the French primacy of the intellect with real respect. The bookshops here are full of French as well as of German books; Austrian children go to the French Lycee, where, however, the teachers of German are all Frenchmen. After seven years, most of the young people are bi-lingual, and the tremendous current vogue of swimming, camping, skiing, and all outdoor sports, is another tremendously uniting factor.

That real good should have come to Hitler's native land from his overthrow is surprising: we are all so tinged with Protestant or Jansenist melancholy that I, for one, find it hard to believe that, on any scale, good can triumph here below over evil. And yet, listening to the alternating Austrian and French bands, to the alternating French and Austrian testimonies, I had to accept that here, in Austria, it at least *seems* to be so doing. No doubt very briefly—but it is a poor heart that never rejoices, and French and Austrian hearts, thank God, are not poor, whatever their purses may be. So rejoice they do, both publicly and privately.

ANNE FREMANTLE.

**BOOKS**

# The Climate of Yoknapatawpha

WILLIAM FAULKNER: A Critical Study. By Irving Howe. Random House. $3.

By JOHN W. SIMONS

WILLIAM Faulkner's literary reputation, though seemingly well established, has received surprisingly little extended critical attention. It is odd that an author whose work is so incontinently admired in France —and whose influence on Malraux, Sartre and Camus has been crucial —has been so hesitantly accepted in his own country. The quarterly reviews have explored aspects of his work with fine-spun ingenuity, but a general estimate has been limited to a few essays, notably those of George Marion O'Donnell, Malcolm Cowley, and Robert Penn Warren.

Irving Howe's study is meant to be a full-dress examination, though the author sensibly warns us that an examination of an author whose creative energies show no signs of diminution is bound to be tentative. Mr. Howe's book will disappoint the cultists, since his admiration for Faulkner, while genuine, is not without reservations. Moreover, in an era in which critical schools are numerous and exclusive, any critical work must risk the label of heterodoxy. Mr. Howe is in the socio-aesthetic tradition of Matthiessen and Arvin, and it is within that tradition that his work will be properly assessed.

In the meantime, for the unattached and uninitiated reader, Mr. Howe's book performs a distinct service. It succeeds admirably in easing the approach to Faulkner's formidable Yoknapatawpha world, it asserts the major themes, and it does something—though by no means everything—to acclimate the reader to Faulkner's convolution of styles. The book is divided into two sections — "The Yoknapatawpha World," and "An Achievement Measured." Mr. Howe comes perilously near to treating of Yoknapatawpha as if it were the matter of Faulkner's art, and of the style as if it were the form. It is, of course, the vision which creates the technique. Yoknapatawpha is the style.

For a long time the nature of Faulkner's experiment remained a mystery, and indeed there is still much about his experiment which resolutely resists analysis. But as the critics came to encompass the technique of *The Sound and the Fury* and *As I Lay Dying*—works which, though among the author's earliest, are commonly regarded as his chief successes—it became clear that



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Faulkner was no conscious mystifier, no mere poltergeist of language. His use of language was purposive, and, in view of the severe demands he made of language, amazingly disciplined and effective.

Yoknapatawpha has been regarded as a symbol of the post-bellum South, and there is no doubt that Faulkner, by reason of ancestry, sensibility and choice, is committed to that segment of Mississippi which his novels so thinly disguise. Faulkner is, then, for what the term is worth, a regional novelist. But Yoknapatawpha has also been taken as a symbol of the cosmos. This view is, within limits, tenable. But we must not think of Faulkner's fictional world as if it were a mere naturalistic transcript of the actual world in which Faulkner lives. It is itself a creation, a cosmos; and in that sense it is a projection of the author's moral consciousness.

That consciousness is, on the part of Faulkner, extraordinarily sensitive, extraordinarily mobile, and extraordinarily volatile. The "amount of felt life," to borrow James' term, in a Faulkner novel is terrifying. It is, in fact, so overwhelming as to threaten the destruction of the art which purports to be its evocation. And it is this, I think, which accounts for Faulkner's occasional violence of language, his wilfulness, and his rhetorical irresponsibility. It is a self-laceration, inflicted, not because of any failure of perception, but because of an inability to domesticate language to the nuances of the vision.

Faulkner at times finds it difficult not to involve himself in his own creation. He exchanges, to quote James once more, "the posted presence of the watcher" for the fearsome complexities of the actor. The loss of distance involves a certain lack of poise and a consequent blurring of the theme. And rhetoric is his revenge. Sometimes it is a quite remarkable revenge, having an aesthetic existence of its own. Even so, it is the fury of failure, the mask of an art that is unable to assimilate and transmute.

There is no doubt in my mind that Faulkner's myth of the South has undergone successive revisions. This has not, so far at least, been an advantage to his art; for, while I cannot doubt that Faulkner, any less than Dostoievksi, is capable of giving a successful fictional embodiment to his private perplexities, the temptation to surmount the difficulties rather than to surrender to them has not been fully resisted. We can take, as an instance, Faulkner's attitude to the Negro. It has progressed, as Howe skillfully shows, from one of sympathetic patronage to one of real but obscure acceptance. Yet, even though Lucas Beauchamp (*Intruder in the Dust*) is cast in a quasi-heroic mold, he is, in my opinion, much less authentic artistically than the earlier and less problematic Dilsey (*The Sound and the Fury*).

Faulkner, it is clear, wants no truck with the soulless mechanism of modern urban and industrial civilization. The South which he loves, once a cohesive world with its own aesthetics of living, has succumbed to the all-conquering rapacity of Snopesism. The anguish increases when Faulkner makes the discovery that the ante-bellum South, for all its virtues, was much more a legend than an actuality. In any case, slavery was a curse. It was, perhaps, the South's original and unredeemable sin.

But, although the cosmos which is Yoknapatawpha is fallen and unredeemed, there are certain individuals who are accorded a pseudo-redemption. These are the stoics: those who endure, those who retain a primitive integrity, those who are capable of the gesture of selfhood. Faulkner at times seems to ascribe a mystical value to nature, and those of his characters who innocently and uninhibitedly merge themselves into nature and are somehow identified with nature seem to achieve a sort of godhead.

I do not think, as Howe seems to think, that Faulkner's intelligence functions but feebly, and I do not see any great hiatus between the novelist's abstract reasoning and his artistic intelligence. But it is undeniable that his perceptions outrun his ethical categories. Faulkner's moral consciousness is at war with his moral conscience, and there is a profound dissonance between his tragic apprehension of life and his capacity to account for it. If, as Mark Schorer believes, art is an act of cognition and technique a mode of discovery, it may well be that Faulkner, who is a man of infinite devices, may yet evolve a style which will simultaneously illuminate his private anxieties. Viewed from this angle, Yoknapatawpha seems to be struggling towards a theology.

# An Adolescent Study

THE RED CARNATION. By Elio Vittorini. New Directions. $3.

By SERGE HUGHES

VITTORINI'S *The Red Carnation* is the first Italian novel published since the appearance of *A Hero of our Time* that can bear comparison with that work. It deals, as did Pratolini's novel, with a year in the life of an adolescent, his experiences with prostitutes and Fascists, his gradual immersion in and final acceptance of Life. As such, it represents an important point in the development of the literature of adolescence in Italian novels. Leaving aside invidious comparisons between the two works, this much can be said in all justice and serenity: rarely has an Italian novel been so seedy, pretentious, glib, and completely dependent on the process of reproduction, without anything ever being produced, as *The Red Carnation*. No Italian reader would waste time on this kind of stuff unless he were a subscriber to "Living Biographies of Heroines of Harems," or a rabid collector of pictures like the one on the cover of this novel. And even that type of reader will not particularly take to a kind of writing which slowly and solemnly describes how the hero, in the presence of his prostitute-queen, wants not only to get her to bed but to weep because he knows that now he has lost his pure young love-dream, Giovanna. And certainly that type



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of reader will have no use at all for the muggy philosophical disquisitions on love which lace the closing pages of the novel.

It was once the contention of Italian novelists that when they dealt with the subject, unlike some Russian novelists, they felt no need to turn the prostitute into a sort of mystical pre-Raphaelite virgin, and to embellish the pre-, during, and post-process with all sorts of theosophical and ethical discussions. That idea with all its defects is better than this diluted mixture of seventh-rate Hemingway and no-rate allegorizing.

What is sad in all this nonsense is that the author, Vittorini, is the fine writer who gave us *In Sicily* and *The Twilight of the Elephant*. What is even more sad is that this work was written in 1933-35 and was not permitted to rest in quiet oblivion. Like Pratolini, Vittorini is not averse to reminding American readers of his existence, regardless. It is a stupid policy.

# Christians and Democrats in Europe

CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY IN ITALY AND FRANCE. By Mario Goguel and Francis Einaudi. Notre Dame Press. $4.

By J. N. MOODY

THE vagaries of our current national conventions underline how mysterious the operations of United States politics are to Europeans. The difficulty of comprehension is mutual. Americans have been particularly perplexed by post-war Christian democracy, which has incorrectly been given such labels as "conservative," "clerical," and even "reactionary." The problem is not confined to this side of the ocean: when, after the last war, tradition demanded that the MRP be seated in the French National Assembly according to its ideological orientation, this new grouping insisted it be placed on the Left, next to the Socialists, because of its advanced socio-economic policy; the Radical Socialists (economically conservative, but anti-clerical) fought for the same position, which it had held in the Third Republic, on the score of its attitude on religious questions. A compromise was obtained, which still holds, whereby the MRP deputies occupy the preferential spot next to the Socialists on the lower benches, with the Radicals above them on the upper tiers!

But if Christian democracy presents difficulties, it calls for study, for it is one of the basic political currents in the contemporary world. Since World War II, it is the strongest antagonist of Communism in Western Europe; it is generally the pivot around which free governments have been formed; and it remains the most effective alternate to Communism if dictatorship of the Right is to be avoided. To misinterpret Christian democracy is to misread European political opinion at a time when such an error is apt to be disasterous.

All should welcome this very competent study of the movement in two pivotal European countries. France and Italy were selected because they possess the strongest Communist parties in Western society, and because Christian democracy in each has followed somewhat parallel lines which offer scope for comparison and generalization. It is suspected that an added reason was the availability of two first-rate analysts: M. Goguel has established himself as the best-known interpreter of the party structure of the Third Republic; Professor Einaudi has demonstrated his capacity in his contribution to the recently published *Communism in Western Europe* (Cornell University Press, 1951).

Christian democracy is possible only in countries with a background of Church-State conflict. It arises as a reaction to the more extreme form of anti-clericalism of the previously ruling classes, and can only come into being where a considerable body of Catholics, or religiously oriented people, has become deeply convinced of the values of the democratic system and wish to restore



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religious criteria to democratic political life. It is an attempt to solve the most profound political dilemma of our time: how to retain for man the freedom and autonomy due a divinely created being, and at the same time, provide for economic security by those collective policies which the complexity and solidarity of modern economic life require.

It is the thesis of these studies that Italian Christian Democracy and the MRP have succeeded tolerably well in plotting their course between the twin evils of capitalistic individualism and materialistic collectivism, and that their constructive attempts have given a new vitality to continental politics which enhances the hope for the survival of democracy. Yet each suffers from the specific handicaps of the national heritage, from the difficulties of moderate parties facing the challenge of extremism in a tense political atmosphere, and from the usual difficulty of translating high ideals into practical policies. The balance sheet is finely drawn in each study and prospects for the future indicated.

## Humanist Hermit

A MONUMENT TO SAINT JEROME. Edited by Francis X. Murphy, C. SS. R. Sheed and Ward. $4.50.

By HENRY G. J. BECK

WHAT the contributors to this volume have given us is not a text to rival Cavallera's classic biography of Jerome (1922) but a series of ten essays on aspects of the man's life, works and influence. The subjects treated are varied enough: the personality of the saint, his role as exegete, historian, humanist, director of souls, his relation to Greek thought, his judgment on the barbarians, his views on the canon of the Scriptures, and the study of his writings during the early Middle Ages. The essays generally bear the notes of authority and freshness, with the competence of their authors—Cavallera, Palanque, Laistner and Bardy among them—long since established. The ensemble serves admirably as a monument to the testy scholar whom the Church honors as her *doctor maximus* in the interpretation of Holy Writ.

No doubt the fact that this is a mélange deprives it to some extent of the unity one finds in Père Antin's recent *Essai sur saint Jérôme* (Paris, 1951). Although there are duplications from essay to essay, the editor has done his work well in holding discrepancies to an absolute minimum. Fr. Murphy himself assigns Jerome's departure from Aquileia to 372 A.D.—which is probably the better date—while Canon Bardy suggests 374. There is a slip wherein Gregory of Tours gets confused with his predecessor St. Martin. But Homer, too, has been known to nod.

Amid so much that is excellent, it is perhaps unfair to single out particular studies. However, the reader will be struck, I think, by the especial worth of discussions by Fathers Hartmann and Skehan of the hermit's scriptural contributions, as well as by the nice balance of Fr. Quain's picture of Jerome as humanist. For myself, I should like to have seen a re-examination of the Origenist


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Controversy inasmuch as Fr. Murphy's own "Rufinus of Aquileia" (Washington, 1945) was content to follow Cavallera's chronology without paying sufficient heed to the suggestions made by Holl and Jülicher in 1916. And now that it is nine years since George de Plinval produced a reinterpretation of Pelagius, it is regrettable that the heresiarch still comes off as blackly as ever.

## Slave Labor

ONE OF THE FIFTEEN MILLION. By Nicholas Prychodko. Little, Brown. $3.

By JAN OLECHOWSKI

IN the grim history of terror in Soviet Russia, the years 1937-1938 are marked with particular horror. Never before was the mass persecution of people organized on such a large scale, with such definite plan and purpose. The case is perhaps parallel with Hitler's attempt to exterminate Jews and Slavs. The Nazis' racial persecution was widely publicized in the civilized world and served as an inspiration for the crusade against Hitler. But the Western world was generally unaware that Stalin in the years 1937-1938 established systematic forced labor as the main element of the economic development of Soviet Russia. It seemed at that time to be purely an internal affair of a remote and mysterious Communist country.

There were forced labor camps in Soviet Russia before 1937, but in that year the process of recruiting millions of slave workers was carried through with unusual force, with cruelty and cold scientific calculation. Besides, there were a few other objectives to be achieved by the arrest of millions of innocent people. First of all was the attempt to break down the social and ideological resistance of the peasant class. The Russian peasants never really accepted communism in any form. Being the largest and strongest social class in Russia, with a deep sense of tradition, they tried hard to preserve their own way of life. Conflict with the totalitarian-minded Soviet


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rulers was unavoidable. It came in these tragic years of 1937 and 1938.

The new propaganda drive started in Soviet newspapers. It described a "kulak" (simply a peasant with twenty-five acres of land) as the worst "enemy of the people." The liquidation of "kulaks" provided the Soviet regime with slave manpower on a greater scale than was ever mobilized in history. Stalin's former personal secretary, Yezhov, was entrusted with the execution of the cruel task. His name became a symbol of terror in Russia. Yezhov's shadow fell particularly upon the Ukraine, the richest agricultural region of the Soviet Union, where peasants have a long tradition of freedom. Here the charge of Ukrainian nationalism became an effective weapon in Yezhov's hands. Soon after the conclusion of his infamous work Yezhov himself was liquidated, also as "an enemy of the people." He was succeeded by Beria, who put all the blame of the persecutions on his predecessor. Nevertheless, the millions of Yezhov's victims remained in labor camps, building railways, canals, bridges in the remotest and wildest parts of Soviet Union. The slave labor machine began to function smoothly, according to plan.

Nicholas Prychodko's book *One of Fifteen Million* is a bitter document of those times. Prychodko was a scientific worker in Kiev University and never expected to be sent to a forced labor camp. But his father was an Ukrainian "kulak" and there were two Orthodox priests in his family. He received a sentence of ten years without any trial. Actually he was lucky because he was released after serving only three years, thanks to the deeply moving efforts of his aged mother, who painstakingly found her way to the late president of the Supreme Soviet, Mr. Kalinin, and begged him to save her son.

Mr. Prychodki after many difficult experiences finally escaped to Canada, where he is living now. His book is marked by passionate bitterness, but maybe it is time for strong language in presenting the case of Soviet slave labor, which is one of the most important moral issues of our civilization—a crime against humanity itself.

# Non-Russians in the Soviet Union

THE NATIONALITY PROBLEM OF THE SOVIET UNION. By R. Smal-Stocki. Bruce. $6.

By N. S. TIMASHEFF

THIS is a very peculiar book indeed; in fact, two books in one. The first is a scholarly investigation of the actual status of the nationalities in the Soviet Union. Although, contrary to the author's opinion, the oppression of nationalities under the disguise of a "national federation" is well known in America, Professor Smal-Stocki unveils an important, but rather neglected thing: this is the deliberate mutilation of the languages of these nationalities, by order of the men in the Kremlin.

The other book, which continuously invades the scholarly part of the work, is a vehement political pamphlet against those who dare doubt whether the dismemberment of the body politic which formerly was called Russia is feasible and desirable. The author is fully entitled to believe that it is both desirable and feasible, but he is hardly entitled to say that the presidents of the American universities are commissars, since they do not fire men whom Professor Smal-Stocki badly dislikes; that there exists, in America, an Iron Curtain destined to veil the truths which he wants to convey; that America has been conquered by a Russian conspiracy in which forces of the White *emigrés* cooperate with those of Stalin.

This book is written against the canon of scientific research, namely *cum ira et studio*. In lists of conspirators, names of prominent scholars like Professor Karpovich of Harvard are thrown together with those of Communist fellow-travellers like Corliss Lamont, and even of outright traitors and spies. Quite plausible linguistic theories like those of Professor N. Trubetskoy, a Russian philologist prominent at the University of Vienna, are castigated without valid reason, and with the display of complete ignorance of present-day views on the origin, development and filiation of ethnic groups. Historical facts are distorted. It is asserted that Kiev (the Ukraine) represents the republican and Moscow (Great Russia) the despotic tradition. But it was just on the Great Russian territory that, for centuries, three city republics, Novgorod, Pskov and Viatka, flourished. At another place, Professor Smal-Stocki notices this distortion, and corrects it by another: to the three branches of the Eastern Slavs, the Great Russians, the Ukrainians and the Belorussians, he adds a fourth one, the Novgorodians. A fine discovery it would be—if there were any evidence in its favor.

The author's purpose was obviously to serve the cause of the independence of the non-Russian nationalities of the Soviet Union. But through the extravagance and exaggerations of the political part of his work he has rendered that cause a signal disservice. Professor Smal-Stocki is so angry with his foes that, according to an old dictum, he obviously must be wrong. One could conclude by expressing the desire that the author publish another version of his work, eliminating the political diatribes and perhaps condensing somewhat the quotations from Soviet sources which, in the scholarly part of the book, are too many and too lengthy.

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**REVIEWERS**

**Rev. John W. Simons is a priest of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, a member of the Immaculata College faculty.**

**Serge Hughes teaches in the modern language department at St. John's University, Brooklyn.**

**Rev. J. N. Moody is a member of the faculty of Cathedral College, New York City.**

**Rev. Henry G. J. Beck teaches at the Immaculate Conception Seminary, Darlington, New Jersey.**

**Jan Olechowski is a native Pole who was himself sentenced to a Soviet labor camp. He served two years in various camps in the USSR. Mr. Olechowski recently settled in the United States and is now employed as a free-lance writer by Radio Free Europe.**

**N. S. Timasheff is a Fordham professor and the author of several distinguished socio-political studies.**

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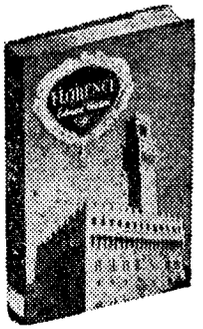

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## By Edward Hutton

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